

# 2013 TCT Refresher Session

USCG Auxiliary district eleven  
northern region

# TCT Elements in Review- Operational Risk Management

Accept No Unnecessary Risk

Accept Necessary Risks only when Benefit outweighs  
Costs...Warranted Effort

Risk Decisions must be made at the Appropriate Level

ORM doesn't stop at the pier. Crews shall continually assess the conditions surrounding the Sortie, be mentally prepared to end the mission when risk outweighs gain.

# Policy Requirements

## ALWAYS CONDUCT A THOROUGH RISK ASSESSMENT PRIOR TO A PATROL

Very few Auxiliary Missions require hasty mission planning. Budget plenty of time prior to getting underway to complete the GAR model.

## UPDATE YOUR RISK ASSESSMENT THROUGHOUT THE MISSION

Get in the habit of reassessing your GAR score prior to and following drills like MOB or Towing.

Make sure the crew understands your facility's mechanical situation so that they can make an accurate risk assessment.

This process need not be formal, simply "Green" "Amber" "Red"

# The GAR – Green Amber Red Model

The Order Issuing Authority (OIA) should specify which GAR worksheet they want Auxiliary Facilities to use .

In the absence of a specified sheet by OIA, use the GAR worksheet provided by National Response Department at:

<http://www.cgaux.org/response/documents/GAR%20model%20Surface%20Ops.pdf>

DIRAUX is working with Sector/Group/D11 to standardize GAR worksheet across the D11 Northern Region

New Guidance from D11: Coxswains are only required to report the **COLOR** to Operational Control. Discussion Point: Do we report it if our score changes, but the color doesn't?

# Risk Assessment Must Include the Following Factors:

Complexity of the Mission

Environmental Factors

Crew Fitness and Selection

Any other factor that could impact the safety of the crew or the mission outcome

Remember that Mishaps and Problems generally only affect the "Other Guys"...

Also remember that to everyone else, you are the "other guy."

# The Seven Critical Skills to TCT

“The Magnificent Seven”

# Situational Awareness

## When it's working....

The whole crew knows what is going on around them.

Everyone is briefed on the goals and desired outcomes of the mission.

Everyone understands what key tasks must be completed to get the job done.

Bottom line: If it's working, errors get trapped and mishaps can be avoided.

## When it's not....

One or two crewmembers control all the info..."Mushroom treatment"

The "whys", "what's", and "How come's" arrive on scene...that's a warning sign.

Individuals become fixated on individual tasks, the big picture begins to slip away.

Bottom Line: "Loss of Situational Awareness" is the current mishap celebrity.

# Adaptability/Flexibility-The Ability to react to changing conditions

When it's working...

Crewmembers pick up on cues (Situational Awareness) and begin reassessing matters.

Expected outcomes change.

Key tasks and mission essential information is relayed to all, including OPCON.

Bottom Line: "No Battle Plan survives first contact with the enemy" plan for the plan to fail.

When it's not working...

The crew expects the leader to pick up on the cues.

Crews continue to try and make the wrong plan work.

The leader changes the plan, but the crew doesn't "get the memo".

Bottom Line: Darwin's Theory of boat operations.



# Communication-Verbal and Non-Verbal

## Good Comms...

Ensures that the crew knows what's happening, increases everyone's situational awareness.

Ensures the crew, OPCON, and our customers know what key tasks need to be accomplished.

Help identify information gaps.

Ensure everyone "gets the memo" when the plan changes.

Utilizes Feedback Loops, Repeat Backs.

## Bad Comms...

Increases the stress level of all involved. Information is power, those without it feel powerless.

Can cause crewmembers to focus on the wrong tasks.

Are the most common reason for failed evolutions; typically more so than lack of skills or competency.

# Leadership- Who's in Charge?

Leadership is not about giving orders.

Leaders do find ways to obtain the willing participation of others towards accomplishing a goal.

Remember that the goal must be aligned with current policies and the mission at hand.

As Volunteers, we cannot “order” anyone to do anything. We have to have respect and trust of our shipmates to make things work.

# Assertiveness

Is....

Caring about the mission outcome, how the Coast Guard and Auxiliary is regarded among the boating public.

Speaking up when something doesn't seem right, even if you can't quite figure out what is wrong. Think funny smells in a cockpit.

Seeking resolution when conflicting information or opinions are present.

Isn't...

Being the "Alpha Dog" and calling all the shots.

Only a privilege of the experienced, or a perk that comes with seniority in the organization.

Caring about how you will be perceived by your peers or others.

# Mission Analysis

Making a plan, and then a plan for when that first plan fails. A plan feeds “When/Then” thinking instead of relying on “If/Then” thinking.

Organize your team and equipment. Allocate time to make sure you communicate contingency plans to your most precious resource, your crew.

Identify the key tasks and critical decision points that lay ahead.

Brief it, Brief, Brief it. Remember that very few Auxiliary Missions require hasty planning.

# Decision Making

The Heart of TCT

The other critical skills feed the decision-making process:

Gather information (SA)

Analyze the information (MA)

Identify Alternatives (A&F)

Select the alternative that meets the mission goals consistent with policy  
(Leadership)

Monitor the outcome, start gathering information for the next decision  
point

# Participant Session

A breezy day in New York lower bay

# Breezy Day in NY Bay

**Mission:** Assist with safety zone for Atlantic Highlands Bay Day Regatta and swim. Safety and crowd control duties. Several celebrities scheduled to participate in the regatta.

**Facility:** 27 Foot Zodiac RHIB, walk around center console, 200 HP outboard. Furuno NAVNET system, one mounted VHF, one H/H VHF.

**Crew:** Ed, Coxswain, 14 years boat crew, 10 as coxswain.

Bill, Crew, Facility Owner, 3 years as crew, breaking in Coxswain.

Susan, Crew, 7 years experience

Howard, 15 years experience, new to area though.

# Breezy Day in NY Bay

## **Weather:**

88F and Hazy

Winds NW 15kts, gusting to 20kts.

Humid

Low Tide at 1032 hours local

Water Temp 69F

## **Location:**

Lower New York Harbor, North of Atlantic Highlands Municipal Marina



# Breezy Day in NY Bay

Experienced Auxiliary Boat Crew from D1S

Assigned to maintain a safety zone during celebrity sailing regatta and fund-raising swim

Three Auxiliary Vessels and one Active Duty CG RBS tasked by SECTOR New York, Coxswain of RBS serves as PATCOM.

Following regatta north of the marina breakwall, swimmers will depart from marina pier 4 and swim around the breakwall to Atlantic Highlands Yacht Club.

# Breezy Day in NY Bay

Prior to leaving his house, an hour before arriving at the marina, Ed fills out the GAR worksheet.

As the break in Coxswain, Bill conducts the underway brief for the crew and assigns tasks for departing. Feeling a bit rushed, Ed calls SECNY via cell phone to advise them of his GAR score of 12. The crew dons Type III PFD's and SAR vests.

SECNY Watch stander reminds Ed to contact PATCOM on VHF-21 once he gets on scene.

Once underway, the noise of the wind, combined with the engine noise makes the installed radio difficult to hear. Howard has the H/H VHF in his SAR Vest pocket.

# Breezy Day in NY Bay

The crew arrives on scene at the west end of the regatta course. Traffic is heavy in vicinity of the course and the crew gets to work advising a group of fishermen that a COTP safety zone is about to go up.

About forty minutes after arriving on scene, the CG RBS pulls alongside. The coxswain seems agitated and asks if the Aux crew is having radio issues. He tells Ed that he's been trying to call them on VHF-21 for thirty minutes.

Embarrassed, Ed apologizes. Conducts a radio check on VHF-21 and checks in with PATCOM. Once the RBS departs, he chastises Howard for not having the Handheld VHF set to VHF-21, a common practice in this AOR.

# Breezy Day in NY Bay

At the conclusion of the celebrity sailing regatta, the AUX facility proceeds into Atlantic Highlands Marina to assist with the swim. They enter the Marina from the main, East, entrance.

The Crew loiters in vicinity of the swim start at the west end of the harbor. Susan notices that the Sea Streak High Speed Ferry is entering the Harbor from the east entrance. This Ferry provides hourly trip from Atlantic Highlands, NJ to Manhattan, NYC. Susan announces the ferry's presence to the crew.

As the last swimmers enter the water, it is apparent to Ed that several are struggling today due to the gusty winds and chop. He takes the helm from Bill and moves in closer, following the stragglers.

# Breezy Day in NY Bay

As they approach the West Cut in the Break wall; Ed, Howard, and Bill are watching the struggling swimmers and discussing their recovery options should they be waved in.

Susan, who has been watching the Ferry unload and load at it's terminal, announces that the ferry has gotten underway and appears to be following the Aux Facility out of the Marina. Ed tells Howard, who was starting to focus on the chart plotter, to hail the ferry on VHF-13 and inquire about her intentions.

Bill warns Ed to steer clear of the rocks to starboard since the wind is blowing harder than usual.

# Breezy Day in NY Bay

Suddenly, the boat jerks to an abrupt stop. The depth sounder alarms goes off and the engine stalls. Ed declutches the engine, secures it, while Bill and Susan go forward to rig the anchor. Howard points to the plotter and shows Ed where they appear to be among the ruins of the Old Clam cannery pier.

Ed contacts PATCOM via radio and advises of their situation. The Anchor holds and the wind blows them clear of the obstruction.

A second Aux facility takes them into tow and safely moors them at the Yacht Club Haul Out. Subsequent investigation reveals damage to all three propeller blades, a crack in the outboard skeg, and several scratches in the fiberglass hull of the Zodiac.

Bill is not happy.

# Your Mission...

Among your “Crew” of tablemates, assign a note taker.

Identify to the key tasks that needed to be completed for this mission to be a success.

Document 3-5 points where things didn't go as planned or could have been improved.

Document 3-5 points that went well.

Write them down on the sticky notes provided.

# Discussion and Documentation

You have ten minutes



# What went well?

## “The Plusses”

A GAR worksheet was completed

An adequate facility was assigned

The Facility had a certified crew onboard and they were properly equipped with PPE.

The coxswain quickly established comms once their error was pointed out.

The lookout was communicating with the crew

The coxswain and Break-in were having a “When/Then” conversation about the struggling swimmers

Initial action upon striking the submerged object was correct and prudent.

# What didn't go so well?

## The "Deltas"

The coxswain didn't involve the crew in the GAR worksheet

The crew didn't seem to question the lack of GAR discussion.

A radio check was not conducted prior to getting underway.

The newer crewmember was not advised of the local practice of listening to VHF-21.

As the situation became complicated, the crew was not given specific tasking.

The coxswain's earlier chastising of Howard effectively shut him up for the remainder of the mission.

Focusing on the plotter, Howard probably noticed they were standing into a hazard area, but remained silent.

The crew became task saturated dealing with the swimmers and ferry, lost focus on the navigational picture.

# ...and the lesson here is:

Follow written guidance, include the entire crew on the risk assessment. Complete it on scene for a better picture of what lies ahead.

Brief your crew on the entire plan, including comms and local practices.

Conduct a radio check with all systems before departing.

Praise in public, provide constructive feedback in private.

Use your crew. As tasks multiply, assign them to individuals and make sure they acknowledge you.

Know when to back away if things begin to spiral out of hand.

Speak up if something doesn't look right.

...and the lesson here is:

Thanks. Stay Safe out there.

BOSN James

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